

# AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT PARATRANSIT PLAN FOR CITY OF COLUMBUS, INDIANA

Revised April 2015

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# ColumBUS Transit ADA Paratransit Plan 2013

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**GENERAL INFORMATION** 

Name of Entity Submitting the Plan: City of Columbus

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Columbus, Indiana 47201

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# Definition of Complementary Paratransit Service

The Americans with Disabilities Act regulations require City of Columbus, ColumBUS Transit, as a public entity that operates a fixed route system, to provide complementary paratransit services to individuals with disabilities (that is, service that is comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities who use the fixed route system). See 49 CFR Sec. 37.131 (a).

# Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and of 2008

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities. It provides the general framework and approach for ending discrimination for persons with disabilities. The stated national goals of the ADA are to guarantee that persons with disabilities have equality of opportunity, a chance to fully participate in society, ability to live independently and be economically self-sufficient.

Section 223 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires that public entities that operate non-commuter fixed-route transportation service also provide complementary paratransit service for individuals unable to use the fixed-route system. The regulations define minimum service characteristics that must be met for this service to be considered equivalent to the fixed-route service it is intended to complement. ADA complementary paratransit standards are provided for in 49 CFR Sec. 37.123 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

In general, the law prohibits public transit systems from denying individuals with disabilities the opportunity to use public transportation services, when they are available. It prohibits public entities from providing services that discriminate against persons with disabilities. The ADA requires the development of programs that will ensure the integration of all persons into the public transportation system, and thus all of the opportunities transportation makes possible. The goal is to ensure non-discriminatory, equitable, accessible and safe public transportation, enhancing the social and economic quality of life for people with disabilities.

Specific actions must be taken by public transit agencies to avoid discrimination. For example, the law requires that:

- 1. All newly purchased or leased vehicles used in fixed-route service must be accessible to persons with disabilities.
- 2. Public agencies which provide fixed-route public transportation service also must offer similar complementary paratransit services to individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed-route system.
- 3. New facilities must be accessible.
- 4. Alterations to facilities must include features to make them accessible.

City of Columbus, Columbus Transit complies with all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

# Service Provided by the City of Columbus, ColumBUS Transit

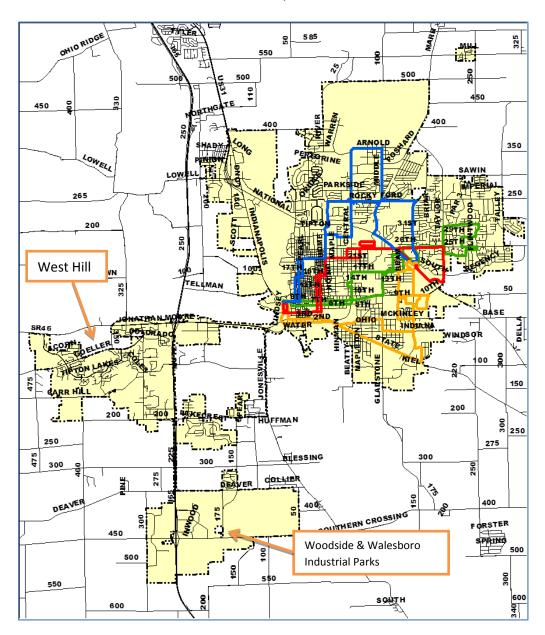
ColumBUS Transit operates fixed-route bus and paratransit services (called Call-a-Bus) from 6:00am to 7:00pm Monday through Friday, and 6:00am to 6:00pm Saturday. The system has a fleet inventory of five (5), heavy-duty, 30-foot, diesel buses for fixed-route operations, and five (5), 12-passenger converted vans for paratransit service. All vehicles are wheelchair accessible, thus all fixed routes are wheelchair accessible.

Current fixed-route service includes four (4) routes. These routes have one-hour headways, and carry about 220,000 passenger trips annually. Full-fare riders pay \$0.25 per one-way trip, plus same fare for each transfer. Half-price fares of \$0.10 per ride are available to Senior Citizens (age 60 and older), disabled individuals, and Medicare/Medicaid cardholders. High school age and younger can get free fare.

Call-a-Bus is an "origin to destination" demand-response service that is provided for persons who, because of disability, are unable to access the fixed-route bus service. The fare for this service is \$0.50 per one-way trip.

Columbus is a fairly compact community. The street network pattern is primarily a grid-system. The four existing public transit routes have a lengthy configuration. Each of the route buses leaves from Mill Race Transit Center, a new transfer station near the downtown, at five minutes after the hour as a timed-transfer point. Similarly, all four outbound buses have a common terminus at the Target Store in the Columbus Shopping Center.

In the map below, the city boundaries are shown in yellow. The four fixed routes are shown in color; they service the central city of Columbus. There is currently no fixed route service to the West Hill area of town nor the industrial parks south of town.



# Services Provided by other Entities

Five other organizations were identified as providing some level of paratransit service in the City of Columbus. These are:

- Area XI Agency on Aging providing transportation for persons over 60 and for those on Medicare going to a medical appointment.
- Development Services Inc. Provides service to consumers of their agency for work related purposes.
- Head Start Provides service to low income children to attend Head Start programs.
- Mill Race Center Service in support of the center.
- Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation Provides school bus transportation, including 17 accessible vehicles.

# Rules for ADA Eligibility for Complementary Paratransit Services

ADA complementary paratransit service must be provided to all passengers described as being ADA eligible under 49 CFR Sec. 37.123. ADA eligibility includes the following:

- 1. Any individual with a disability who is unable, as a result of a physical or mental impairment (including a visual impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a lift or other boarding assistance device), to board, ride or disembark from an accessible vehicle in the fixed-route system. Included in this category are individuals with mental or visual impairments who cannot navigate the fixed-route system.
- 2. Persons who cannot use vehicles without lifts or accommodations. These persons are eligible for paratransit service if accessible fixed-route vehicles are not available on the bus routes in which they need to travel, when they need to travel during operational hours of ColumBUS Transit. (All ColumBUS Transit fixed-route vehicles are accessible).
- 3. Persons with specific impairment related conditions that cannot travel to a boarding location or from a disembarking location to their final destination. The condition must prevent the person from using the fixed-route system. Conditions that make getting to the fixed-route bus stop "more difficult" do not grant eligibility. Second, architectural barriers (such as no curb cuts) are not under the control of ColumBUS Transit, and environmental barriers (such as distance, terrain, and weather) do not, when considered alone, confer eligibility. If, however, travel to or from a boarding location is impossible when these factors are combined with the person's specific impairmentrelated condition, conditional paratransit service will be provided to eligible passengers.

# Call-a-Bus ADA Eligibility Certification Process

Applications for Call-a-Bus ADA eligibility for ColumBUS Transit's complementary paratransit service are available at ColumBUS Transit's office located at The Mill Race Station, 850 Lindsey Street, Columbus, Indiana 47201 or a request for an application to be mailed can be made by calling the ColumBUS Transit office at (812) 376-2506. Applications are also available for download from ColumBUS Transit's website located at www.columbus.in.gov by clicking on the "Departments" tab, then on "ColumBUS Transit". This site also includes hours of operation, holiday schedules, fares, and route information.

There is a two part application (see Appendix A) which you must complete before you are allowed to use ColumBUS Transit Call-a-Bus service. The first part is the Applicant's Questionnaire to be filled by the applicant or someone on the applicant's behalf. The second part is the Medical Professional's Questionnaire, where a medical professional familiar with the applicant answers questions about his or her ability to use fixed route bus service. ColumBUS Transit uses this information to determine eligibility for using the Call-a-Bus Service.

Once the completed application is received, ColumBUS Transit will notify the applicant within twenty-one (21) days of his/her eligibility status. If a determination has not been made within 21 days of receiving the completed application, the applicant will be treated as eligible and will be provided service until ColumBUS Transit determines their eligibility. The applicant will receive a letter verifying whether they are eligible for service or not, and if so, what type of eligibility, and for how long. If the eligibility is limited or denied, ColumBUS Transit will state specifically the reason for the limitation or denial. For visually-impaired customers, a phone call will be made in addition to the letter.

# **Incomplete Applications**

Under conditions where the applicant satisfactorily shows the Medical Professional's Questionnaire cannot be completed in a reasonable time due to protracted appointment dates or other causes beyond the control of the applicant, ColumBUS Transit staff will make a temporary determination regarding eligibility based only on the Applicant's Questionnaire. If granted, it will extend until 21 days after the provided appointment date. If not granted, it will be reconsidered as a new application once the completed Questionnaire is received.

# Types of Eligibility

There will be three (3) types of eligibility: Temporary Eligibility, Conditional Eligibility, Full Eligibility. There can also be Temporary Conditional Eligibility. Temporary Eligibility will expire on a specified date determined by ColumBUS Transit staff based on the application information. Full Eligibility is not eternal, but will expire in a maximum of 5 years. A Conditional Eligibility, for example, may allow individuals to take Call-a-Bus trips to certain destinations due to

inaccessible infrastructure, where other destinations can be accessed successfully by the individual using the fixed-route system. Certain weather conditions like snow or high temperatures may also determine criteria for Conditional Eligibility.

# Eligibility Expiration/Reapplication

ColumBUS Transit can request any or all customers to reapply at any time based on health conditions or after legal or policy changes, among other reasons, but must give 90-day minimum notice of expiration in writing. These requests cannot be arbitrary or capricious, discriminatory, or unreasonably frequent.

# **Eligibility Determination Process**

Eligibility will be determined by trained ColumBUS Transit staff and will be based on ADA eligibility standards described in 49 CFR 37.123 and 49 CFR 37.125. Regulation 49 CFR 37.125(a) states, "The process shall strictly limit ADA paratransit eligibility to individuals specified in 37.123 of this part." The Transit Coordinator will review applications to ensure that due process has been observed. The applicant will receive a letter describing their eligibility. If eligibility is denied or limited, the letter will describe why they were denied or provided limited service, and how they can appeal the decision. The letter will be sent in the format requested in the application.

# Appeals Process for ADA Eligibility

If the applicant disagrees with the determination, he/she may appeal the decision. The appeals process will be carefully explained to all applicants who are rejected or granted limited eligibility. The following steps will be used to appeal the eligibility determination:

- The applicant will have sixty (60) days to file an appeal with the Transit Coordinator, which can be mailed, emailed or presented in person to the ColumBUS Transit Mill Race Station.
- An appeals committee consisting of the Transit Coordinator, MPO Director, the City Director of Operation and Finance, and a selection of two peer Call-a-Bus customers will investigate all eligibility appeals. The Transit Coordinator may collect additional information as part of the review. The applicant will have the opportunity to be heard in person or may submit all his/her arguments in writing or an accessible format. The appeals committee will have fourteen (14) days from the date of the appeal to render a decision. After fourteen (14) days, the applicant will be presumed eligible until a decision has been reached. The applicant will be notified by letter, and other methods requested.
- If a customer appeal is denied and the applicant believes the ADA paratransit eligibility process was unfair, the applicant can file a complaint with the Federal Transit

Administration Office of Civil Rights, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington D.C. 20590 (866) 377-8642 (Voice) (800) 877-8339 (TTY)

If you are interested in becoming a peer member of the Appeals Committee, please contact the Operations Assistant.

# ADA Eligible Visitors Policy

Visitors not from this jurisdiction may be able to use Call-a-Bus. Visitors who are ADA eligible with another transit system may use Call-a-Bus services. Visitors shall provide ColumBUS Transit with documentation that (1) they are not residents of Columbus, and (2) they are paratransit eligible elsewhere. If they cannot show ColumBUS Transit staff they are eligible elsewhere, but can show sufficiently they are a visitor and are disabled, they may use Call-a-Bus services for up to 21 different days for one (1) year. If the visitor needs further service, he/she must apply for Call-a-Bus eligibility.

# Meeting the Requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act

Under ColumBUS Transit Paratransit Service Plan, the level of service provided to persons determined to be ADA eligible is similar to ColumBUS Transit's fixed-route bus service. Six service criteria are included in the regulations. The following is a description of how ColumBUS Transit's paratransit service meets or exceeds the service criteria:

# **Service Area:**

ADA complementary paratransit service is provided to all origins and destinations within the service area defined as the city limits of Columbus. For Columbus Transit, the basic service is not only centered on each fixed-route and extending \% of a mile to either side of the fixedroute, but also includes all areas within the city limits of Columbus.

# **Response Time:**

As stated in the regulations, pick up times will be negotiated with ADA eligible passengers to make scheduling more efficient. As a shared-ride service, Columbus Transit is allowed to negotiate within a one-hour window on either side of the requested pick up time. Any negotiation of time will be discussed with the passenger prior to pick up. The vehicle can arrive up to fifteen (15) minutes before or after the agreed upon time.

# **Fare Structure:**

Fares charged for an ADA eligible complementary service trip to ADA eligible users will be twice the amount of the base cash fare paid by passengers of the Columbus Transit fixed-route system. The 2012 fare for a one-way complementary paratransit trip is currently fifty cents (\$.50). This price is subject to change.

Personal Care Attendants (PCA) traveling with the ADA eligible passengers will not be charged, as defined in the regulations.

# **Trip Purposes:**

There are no priorities for trip purpose.

# **Hours and Days of Service:**

ADA complementary paratransit service shall be offered during the same days and hours that Columbus Transit offers fixed-route service. As of the adoption of this Plan, the hours of operation are Monday-Friday 6:00am to 7:00pm, and Saturday 7:00am to 6:00pm. These hours are subject to change without a change to this document.

# **Hours and Days of Reservation Requests:**

Telephone reservation requests are accepted Monday - Saturday 8:00am to 5:00pm, Sunday reservation hours are also 8:00am to 5:00pm, but these may be taken by a message machine and may be responded to Monday morning. Recorded requests are not guaranteed.

Reservations can be made from three (3) weeks before the trip to the day before the trip. No same-day requests will be accepted (see exception below).

# No-same-day Request Exception

Same-day requests may be granted only in situations where (1) the need was unknown in time to meet the day-before policy, (2) no reasonable alternatives to Call-a-Bus are available, (3) and there is an urgency, although one that does not extend to an emergency (911) call. This is determined by the Operations Assistant or Transit Coordinator.

# **Capacity Constraints:**

There are no capacity constraints at this time. Call-a-Bus has strict service standards that are adhered to. Call-a-Bus strives to accept every trip request.

ColumBUS Transit does not limit the number of Call-a-Bus trips an eligible passengers can make.

# Personal Care Attendant Policy

Personal Care Attendants (PCA) will be permitted to accompany ADA eligible riders on ADA eligible trips at no charge. ColumBUS Transit will require that passengers state the need for a PCA when they schedule their trip. ColumBUS Transit does not provide PCA's.

One guest will be allowed to accompany an ADA eligible complementary paratransit passenger on their ADA eligible paratransit trip. More than one guest will be allowed on a space available basis. The PCA is not considered to be a "guest" or companion. All guests, family members, companions, or friends are required to pay the applicable paratransit fare.

# Columbus Transit's Origin-to-Destination Assistance Policy

It is the policy of ColumBUS Transit to provide paratransit services within the City limits of Columbus. Transportation service is provided by ADA accessible buses or vans. To ensure timely service, ColumBUS Transit's paratransit services are considered curb-to-curb. Operators are trained to provide minimal assistance only.

Drivers will help to and from the door if Personal Care Attendant, friend, family member, or companion have been asked but are not available, and such special assistance has been requested the day before the trip or earlier.

# **Shopping Trips**

To ensure timely service, passengers are encouraged only to bring what they can carry on their own or with the assistance of a PCA.

# Pick-up Policies

Call-a-Bus has a 30-minute pick-up window which allows the Call-a-Bus vehicles to arrive 15 minutes before to 15 minutes after the scheduled pickup time. Customers must board within 5 minutes of the vehicle that arrive within the 30-minute window. Drivers can leave after waiting 5 minutes if the customer does not appear.

- Customers will be charged with a "No Show" if they do not board the van within 5 minutes after the van arrives. If the driver has not left after 5 minutes, the customer will still be charged with a "No Show".
- If the Call-a-Bus vehicle will be more than 15 minutes late for a scheduled pick-up time, Columbus Transit will make every effort to let the Customer know.
- If the Call-a-Bus vehicle is 20 minutes later than the scheduled pick-up time, then the Call-a-Bus trip is free.

# **Cancellation Policies**

To cancel reservations, passengers should notify dispatch as soon as possible, but at least one (1) hour before their scheduled transport time. Canceling within one (1) hour of the schedule time will result in a "No Show".

The customer may be considered a "No Show" if:

- No Show customer does not show up for a scheduled ride
- Late Boarding Boards more than 5 minutes after the van arrives (van can leave after 5 minutes).
- Not Riding Chooses not to ride once the van arrives
- Late Cancellation Cancels the ride within 1 hour of scheduled time

No Shows will not be imposed for circumstances beyond the customer's control.

If the customer does not show up for a trip, any subsequent trips scheduled for the same day will be canceled. ColumBUS Transit shall notify the customer of the No Show within 24 hours. This can be done verbally in person, by phone, email, etc. as long as there is an acknowledgement from the customer of the notification.

If the customer receives a No Show three (3) times within a three (3) month period, their paratransit eligibility may be suspended for thirty (30) days. Customers will be notified of suspensions in writing, usually by mail.

# No Show Appeals

A Call-a-Bus customer may appeal a No Show. The appeal must be in writing and provided to the Transit Coordinator within ten (10) days of the notification. Appeals may be initiated by the customer or by another person on the customer's behalf and document the specific reason that the incident was beyond the customer's control or other reasons the appeal should be granted. The appeal will be determined by the Transit Coordinator within fourteen (14) days, or the No Show will be removed.

# Suspension Appeals

The customer may appeal suspensions within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the suspension letter. Appeals may be initiated by the customer or by another person on the customer's behalf and received by mail or presented in person to the Transit Coordinator. The appeal must document the specific reason that the incident was beyond the customer's control or other reasons the appeal should be granted.

For suspensions, the same Appeals Committee as described in the "Appeals Process for ADA" Eligibility" section above will be used. The customer will have the opportunity to be heard in person or may submit all his/her arguments in writing or an accessible format. The Committee will issue a response in writing within fourteen (14) calendar days of the receipt of the appeal. During the appeals process, the customer's eligibility will remain until the outcome of the appeal.

# Description of the Public Participation Process

ColumBUS Transit, in an effort to solicit full public participation, has defined a comprehensive public participation process.

The city also solicited the input of persons with disabilities in the development and implementation of the ADA paratransit service through the City's Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) which consists of service agencies and disabled riders that utilize the paratransit service (see Appendix B). The TAC was substantially involved in the development of the proposed changes to the plan. Minutes of TAC meetings can be found in Appendix C.

The city conducted a public hearing to solicit public comment on this Plan and the changes herein. This was held on Monday, April 1<sup>th</sup>, from 2:00pm to 6:00pm. The Plan was available in hard copy at the ColumBUS Transit Mill Race Station and the City Hall Clerk/Treasurers office, and online. Notices were also up at the Mill Race station and on all the buses. The legal notice, the notice in the buses, and the comments/responses from the Public Hearing and during the public input period can be found in Appendix D [pending completion].

Lastly, the City's Board of Public Works shall consider adopting this Plan at their public meeting.

was approved on theday of	aratransit Plan for the City of Columbus, Indiana 2013 by the City of Columbus Board of
Public Works. This policy will go into effect r The expected date of implementation is the	o sooner than 1 month from this approval dateday of2013.
Kristen Brown, Mayor	
	ATTEST:
Susan Fye, Member	Luann Welmer, Clerk-Treasurer

# **MPO Certification of Revised Paratransit Plan**

The City of Columbus Metropolitan Planning Organization hereby certifies that it has reviewed the revised ADA paratransit plan prepared by the City of Columbus as required under 49 CFR Part 37.139(h) and finds it to be in conformance with the transportation plan developed under 49 CFR 613 and 23 CFR 450 -- the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) joint planning regulation.

Additionally, by signature this certification is to providing ADA paratransit service as part of Regional Transportation Coordination Plan.	
Signature	Title
Name of authorized official	Date

# **APPENDIX A - Sample Eligibility Application**



### CALL-A-BUS ELIGIBILITY APPLICATION

The purpose of this application is to provide an opportunity for you to describe how your disability prevents you from riding the ColumBUS fixed route system. This includes any environmental (weather, ice, etc.) as well as physical barriers (terrain, steps, etc.) that prevent you from riding the fixed route. Information contained in this application will be kept confidential and shared with the professionals involved in the evaluation of your eligibility for Call-a-Bus or others only if disclosure is required by law.

Please complete this application as thoroughly as possible and to the best of your ability. If you have difficulty answering any questions on the application or if you need assistance completing this form, please call Call-a-Bus at (812)376-2506. We cannot begin processing the application until it is complete. If a question does not apply to you, please write "Not Applicable" or "NA."

There are two sections to this application;

Applicant's Questionnaire - to be filled out by the applicant or by someone on the applicant's behalf. Medical Professional's Questionnaire - to be filled out by a medical professional familiar with the applicant's abilities.

The application will not be considered complete by Call-a-Bus staff until both Questionnaires are completed in full<sup>1</sup> and delivered or mailed to:

> Call-a-Bus 850 Lindsey Street Columbus, IN 47201 (812)376-2506

1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Incomplete Application: Under conditions where the applicant satisfactorily shows the Medical Professional's Questionnaire cannot be completed in a reasonable time due to protracted appointment dates or other causes beyond the control of the applicant, Call-a-Bus staff will make a temporary eligibility determination based only on the Applicant's Questionnaire. If granted, it will extend until 21 days after the provided appointment date. If not granted, it will be reconsidered as a new application once the completed Questionnaire is received. (See the Call-a-Bus Paratransit Plan)

nt n	Applicant's Q	uestionnaire:	
Please Print:		Data of Ri	rth
Address			Apt
City	State	Zip	
Home Phone	Cell Phone	Work Phone	
Email Address			
Emergency Contact	Re	ationship	Phone
If the applicant is being	g assisted in this section, the a	ssistant should comp	lete this part below:
Name		Daytime	Phone
Address			
Relationship to Applic	eant		Date
To whom should we co	ommunicate with regarding el Assistant		
To whom should we co Applicant If "Other", please fill i	ommunicate with regarding el Assistant n below:	igibility, etc.? Please Other	circle one:
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What mobility aid do you use? (ch	eck all that apply)		
☐ Manual Wheelchair	☐ White Cane		Walker
☐ Motorized Wheelchair	☐ Crutches		Braces
☐ Service Animal	☐ Cane		Other
□ Prosthesis	☐ Portable Oxygen		0
Wheelchair users:Le	engthWidth	Weight	
YOUR USE OF COLUMBUS T	RANSIT FIXED ROUTE SYS	STEM (Check	all that apply)
☐ I use the ColumBUS Trans	it fixed route service frequently	1	
☐ I have never attempted to 1	ide the fixed route buses.		
☐ I believe I could learn to ri	de the fixed route bus, if someon	ne would teach	me.
☐ I can use the fixed route bu	s sometimes, if the conditions a	re right.	
☐ If I use fixed route service	now, I will need the assistance of	of another pers	on. (sometimes/always)
☐ I am not sure if I can ride t	he fixed route buses.		
☐ It is impossible for me to u	se the fixed route buses to some	destinations.	
☐ Would you like travel train	ing to learn to ride the fixed rou	te bus?	
DISABILITY EFFECT			
☐ I have difficulty understan	ding or remembering the schedu	le or my way t	o and from the bus.
☐ I have difficulty or cannot	climb stairs and can only board	a bus with a lif	t/ramp.
☐ I have a visual disability w	hich prevents me from getting to	and from the	bus.
☐ My medical condition is su	sch that I can ride the fixed route	bus only whe	n I am feeling well.
☐ My disability prevents me	from getting to and from the bus	s stop.	
YOUR ABILITY TO USE THE	COLUMBIA TRANSIT EIV	ED DOUTE S	VSTEM
			ISIEWI
List things about riding a fixed  ———————————————————————————————————	route bus that are difficult for y	ou?	
2) Can you cross the street by yo	urself? (Yes/No/Sometimes) Ex	plain	
3) If you have used the fixed rout	e system, when did you use it la	st?	What Route?
	your home? (ex. 5 <sup>th</sup> and Jackso		
4) What is the closest bus stop to			

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT: Please fill out this section if you ha	ave a visual impairment.			
Name of Eye Disease/Condition:_				
My vision is worse during these co	onditions:			
☐ Bright sunlight			Night time	
☐ Dimly lit or shaded pla	ces		I have no vision at all	
My eye condition is				
□ Stable	☐ Degenerative		□ Other	
☐ I can see steps and curbs.				
☐ I can see the route numbers	on the bus from the bus	stop		
☐ I can find the bus stop with  ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Please use this space to tell us an the ColumBUS Transit fixed rou	N: ything else about your t	travel	challenges and your ability to	use
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Please use this space to tell us an	N: ything else about your t	travel	challenges and your ability to	o use
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Please use this space to tell us an	N: ything else about your t	travel	challenges and your ability to	) use
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Please use this space to tell us an	N: ything else about your t	travel	challenges and your ability to	) use
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Please use this space to tell us an	N: ything else about your t	travel	challenges and your ability to	use
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INFORM	ATION RELEASE FO	DRM		
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Applicant	t's Signature		Date	
Witness (i	if assisted)		Date	

# **Medical Professional's Questionnaire**

This Questionnaire is to be filled out by a medical professional who is not only familiar with the applicant's diagnosis, but who is also familiar with his/her mobility. ColumBUS Transit policy requires this to be a medical professional (Physician, licensed Nurse, Physical Therapist, Rehabilitation Specialist, licensed Psychologist, etc). If you have any questions regarding what professionals will be accepted, please call ColumBUS Transit at (812)

### GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL REPORT TO Call-a-Bus

Your patient/client has requested eligibility for Call-a-Bus ADA transportation service. Because of your professional relationship with this applicant, you are uniquely qualified to help clarify his or her functional abilities and limitations. The following are guidelines for using Call-a-Bus. These guidelines may help you understand the information we need to determine the applicant's eligibility for Call-a-Bus.

### ColumBUS Transit fixed-route and Call-a-Bus Service

ColumBUS Transit offers two different types of transportation: ColumBUS Transit fixed-route service and Calla-Bus paratransit service.

ColumBUS Transit fixed-route service provides many accessibility features that make it possible for people with different types of disabilities to use it. These features include: low-floor buses, bus kneeling, and low-slope boarding/alighting ramps (no steps); tie-downs and passenger restraints for wheelchairs; bus stop announcements; large print bus identification signs; priority seating; and alternative-format schedules.

Call-a-Bus paratransit service provides curb-to-curb transportation on a shared-ride basis to eligible individuals whose disability prevents them from using the fixed-route bus transportation at all, or under certain circumstances.

The basis for Call-a-Bus ADA eligibility is the American with Disabilities Act. Eligibility is based on:

- Functional ability to independently perform the tasks necessary for bus use including: getting to and from the bus stop, getting on the bus, riding the bus and understanding how to navigate the system in a variety of environments. A diagnosis by itself does not qualify an individual for Call-a-Bus.
- Whether the disability prevents the individual from performing these tasks (as opposed to the task being more inconvenient or difficult)
- Whether the individual can perform these tasks all of the time, only under some circumstances, or never. An example of "some circumstances": the individual can use the fixed-route if it is two level blocks or less to the bus stop, and no snow or ice are present.

### Information we need from you:

You may expand, in as much detail as you can provide, how this individuals physical, sensory, cognitive or emotional problems may impact his/her ability to travel on a bus. Please relate your comments to the specific tasks necessary to get to and from a bus stop, board, ride and navigate the ColumBUS Transit fixed route system.

If you have any questions regarding Call-a-Bus or this Questionnaire, contact the Transit Coordinator at ColumBUS Transit (812) 376-2506. Thank you for your cooperation.

Please email or mail application to:

Call-a-Bus 850 Lindsey Street Columbus, IN 47201 (812)376-2506

	PROFESSIONAL Y	VERIFICATION
Applicant's Name		Date of Birth
Relationship:		
Relationship with the appl	icant:	No. of years:
Date of last face-to-face co	ontact (by you or your agency)?	
Diagnosis:		AGE COM
		No. of years:
Treatment:		cted Recovery:
	☐ Medication	1
Secondary Diagnosis:		No. of years:
Functional Abilities:  Applicant can walk.	Describe walking ability (distand	e, speed) under good, level conditions:
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# ColumBUS Transit ADA Paratransit Plan 2013

Can the mobility-aided appli	cant:		
☐ Maneuver onto a low-flo	oor bus ramp	☐ Place fare in	
☐ Negotiate up a curb ram	p	☐ Handle fare	tickets
☐ Negotiate down a curb r	amp		
Conditions:	· 11 1 1 1 1	4. 19. 0 / 1 1	41.4 . 4 .
Are any of the following conditions a			
☐ Orientation	☐ Gait or balance		Sensitivity to cold weather
☐ Problem solving	☐ Sense of time		Sensitivity to hot weather
☐ Short-term memory	☐ Judgment		Inappropriate social behavior*
9	☐ Communication		Anxiety level
Other (Please explain)			
*Please describe any inappropriate s		.0. / 1. 11 /1 /1	1.5
Are any of the following conditions of			
☐ High day-to-day variability in di		☐ Visual hallucir	
☐ Inconsistent performance	,-		:controlled?
☐ Auditory hallucinations			
Please explain any checked condition	s:		
	s:		
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# **APPENDIX B - Transit Advisory Committee Members**

Alicia McCreary – United Way 2-1-1 Bob Oxley - Transit user Bob Pitman – Mill Race Center Brandon Shumaker – Developmental Services, Inc. Eric Frey – Administrative Resources Association Jackie Combest – Transit user Tom Heller – Citizen Vicky Warner - Rural Transit Assistance Program Lori Wilkerson – Family Social Services Agency

# Staffed by:

Laurence Brown - CAMPO Director Cindy Setser – Transit Coordinator Rae-Leigh Stark - Planning

**APPENDIX C - Transit Advisory Committee Minutes** 

# Transit Advisory Committee Sept 28, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Minutes written by: Laurence Brown

### Attendees:

Laurence Brown - MPO Director Cindy Setser – Transit Coordinator Vicky Warner – RTAP Director Bob Oxley - Call-a-Bus user Jackie Combest – Call-a-Bus user Alicia McCreary - 2-1-1 Director Brittany Calas – Cummins employee Ryanne Fenimore – Cummins employee Tom Heller – Citizen / transit enthusiast

Cummins – Alicia McCreary is the new director of the 2-1-1 program at United Way. She invited two Cummins employees, Brittany and Ryanne, who are looking into transit as a community involvement project, in particular, interested in transit to job locations like Woodside / Walesboro Industrial areas.

Laurence gave a short presentation on the trends and costs of transit. He compared Columbus transit with the transit of similar-sized cities. Columbus is in the middle with regard to budget and cost/trip. He also presented data comparing fixed route costs and paratransit. Fixed route is about \$4.50/trip and Call-a-Bus is about \$25/trip. While the fixed route is basically the same as it was 25 years ago, Call-a-Bus is now 4 buses and it was 2 buses.

# Eligibility

Laurence introduced the main topic of modifying the Call-a-Bus policies. First topic is changing eligibility from a "self declaration" to eligibility based on ADA requirements. There will be a more substantial application that has an 'applicant questionnaire' and a 'professional questionnaire'. He also pointed out that a deadline of May 1, 2013 is being considered as date by which all currently eligible riders are to re-apply for eligibility.

Jackie asked for us to read what those requirements were. Laurence read bullets 1,2 & 3 from the draft policy document which quotes regulation 49 CFR 37.123. Jackie realizes some users don't need to use Call-a-Bus (could use fixed route), but was worried that this might oust some that do.

Jackie was concerned that this might costs him \$75 to get the professional application done by a physician. Bob worried that some have long waits for doctor appointments, and might not get their applications in on time; it might take 6 months to get an appointment. Laurence pointed out that the 'professional' did not

need to be a physician, but someone familiar with the applicant. Vicky worried that some disabilities are hidden and there must be care taken not to deny eligibility when it's necessary under these cases. Jackie wondered if there was an ability to grant conditional eligibility when the application cannot be filled until after the due date; maybe based on a date of the doctor's (or other professional's) appointment?

### No same-day requests

Laurence discussed the policy change of not accepting same-day Call-a-Bus appointments. These appointments are problematic with scheduling drivers and pick-ups and is a contributor to our "denials" (caller turn-downs) and we are beginning to exceed the allowable FTA limit of denials.

Bob & Jackie said that they both have had times where they needed same-day, so would like to consider exceptions. Jackie provided an anecdote where his wife was taken to the hospital (he accompanied her); she was admitted into the hospital and he needed a ride home.

# Fixed Route Study

### Industrial Park

Vicky said industries did get together in 2007 and wanted services to Woodside industrial park, for example. Cindy indicated she is not getting calls for that, but does get lots of calls for trips to West Hill and businesses along the 46 corridor. Bob suggested that the companies provide a shuttle to Woodside.

### Other Fixed Route Issues

Jackie – He thinks that 1-hour headway is sufficient. He's not so happy with Target as a hub, he would prefer Fair Oaks Mall. Tom wants the study to be broad, instead of just tweaking, looking at the hubs and all routes for possible improvement. Vicky indicated MAP-21 may allow system expansions, but the legislation ends at the end of 2014. Vicky helpfully describe the RFP process for such a study.

### Fare discussion

Alicia was concerned about increasing the fare; many say they can't afford it. Jackie doesn't want it to be \$3-4. Bob suggests that we need to have discount prices, or no cost for transfers, or day passes.

### Other Comments

Tom – fixed-routes do a pretty good job of collecting people from neighborhoods, but not as good at delivering them to where they want/need to go. Jackie – would like to see more bus routes touch at locations where transfers can occur, rather than just meet at transfer stations. Tom strongly seconded this.

Meeting Adjourned

# Transit Advisory Committee Oct 26, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Minutes written by: Laurence Brown

### Attendees:

Laurence Brown - MPO Director Cindy Setser - ColumBUS Transit Coordinator Bob Oxley - Call-a-Bus user Jackie Combest - Call-a-Bus user Tom Heller - Citizen / transit advocate Brandon Shumaker - Developmental Services: Fleet and property manager Bob Pitman - Mill-Race Center Director Alicia McCreary - 2-1-1 Director Rae-Leigh - Planning staff Lori Wilkerson - FSSA

### Minutes:

Brandon - talked about what Developmental Services does. Serve 37 Counties. Headquartered in Columbus. Runs routes to pick people up and then deliver them home in the evening. This is true for most of their facilities throughout the state.

Bob Pitman - Explained some of the transportation equipment that Mill-Race Center has. 3 vans, one is 20 passenger, 2 smaller vehicles - works with "Just Friends".

Laurence - describes the three documents for the ADA, (1) the policy document, (2) the eligibility application, and the User Handbook. We will be breaking out, financially, the cost of Call-a-Bus from the costs of the fixed route system to analyze costs. We have also received a "grant" award from Call-a-Bus software for \$60,000; the grant is actually for \$48,000 of federal dollars, and we'll need to provide

There is an interest to try to make sure that the Call-a-Bus is being used as ADA law demands - being used by those that cannot use the fixed route system due to their disability. We will be searching for that person so that this can get a legal vetting to make sure it is inside the law and good policy.

# ADA Policy Changes based on last month's comments

Issue #1 There was a concern at the last meeting with regard to people not being able to get their application completed because of delays getting their professional portion done; delayed appointments,

Laurence explained the suggested policy: Applicants that show the Professional's Questionnaire cannot be completed by this date may (based on the Applicant's Questionnaire) receive Temporary Eligibility until it is completed and eligibility is determined.

Jackie - thought we might want to require that an appointment has been schedule. Cindy - Some people only have yearly exams and another visit might be a financial burden. Bob O - might want to put a list of professionals.1 Laurence - We will make sure we give some examples. Jackie -was concerned about the expiration - Currently says May 1st. Laurence - We might change that to June 1st. Tom -might want to time eligibility it with the software system use, so we don't have to enter this stuff twice. Cindy - is concerned about that too. Jackie - We ought to get the software system up and running before this eligibility issues starts. Tom - Really suggests that even getting used to the software system will take some time itself

Laurence - Policy change: any level of eligibility makes your fare free for the fixed route system.

### Big discussion on Eligibility

Bob Pitman - Was saying that the eligibility was always confusing and a moving target. Lots of discussion on what should be eligible, what are the sidewalk/street conditions that might cause access to be so limited that these locations should be conditionally eligible? Bob P asked, compared to other transit systems, whether we had an unusually heavy paratransit use. Laurence - our paratransit is 30% or our funding, and most are 10-15%. We've gone from 2 buses to 4 buses on Call-a-Bus, and really

Cindy - She believes that the free ride on fixed route if eligible is going to help some.

Issue #2 - Staff had suggested last meeting to end same-day reservations, and some thought there were times when it should be allowed. Laurence - Bloomington has no exceptions to same-day reservations. Points out that Bloomington has much better taxi service than Columbus:

3 part exception was proposed by Laurence:

- 1) Did not have known about the need in time to meet the scheduling deadline.
- 2) There was no alternative to Call-a-Bus
- There was an urgency

Jackie felt that this was good; that it would have allowed him to use the system on the day he did really need it. They were ok with this.

Laurence summarized the procedure for passing the ADA policy - talk to mayor, have a public hearing, take to BOW. He also noted that we are trying to find an expert to vet this for us.

Laurence - introduced the RFP. Study to look at West Hill, # of Hubs, 30 minute service, express route, increase service hours. Scope of Work: Review Ridership compensation, Projected ridership, on-board data collection, identify trip generators and potential generators, public participation, identify service alternatives, identify route statistics, Pedestrian Environment inventory,

Cindy -she has daily requests for West Hill. She has someone once/week that comes and asks about West Hill. Cindy's concerned that she wouldn't have the bus capacity to handle it. Bob Pitman -Definitely wants something going out to WestHill.

Tom - RFP should ask for a strengths and weakness analysis. Reexamination of the system. Cover the community better, improve frequency, within a budget; is our route structure (two hubs) handcuffing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Professional's Application says the following: "We suggest taking these forms to your Physician, Health Care Professional (Nurse, Physical Therapist, Rehabilitation Specialist, etc.), case manager, social worker. Etc. If you have any questions regarding what professionals will be accepted or if the professional you have chosen is charging you a fee for the completion of this paperwork, please call the ColumBUS at (812) 376-2506."

us? We cover the territory well, but don't deliver people well. Jackie - Likes the idea of the routes touching before we do anything about removing hubs. Bob O - 3 hubs and 20 buses in Jacksonville, and can move people across the town easily. Triangle of hubs in the downtown.

Tom - Kroger is a place that is probably underserved. Cindy - First time in 32 years we are going down US31. Last route studies just tweaked.

Jackie - Before we make these change, do it by car and make sure it works in the car before you actually implement them. Sometimes it looks good on paper, and gets implemented without test, and doesn't work. Laurence - The consultant will not only do the plan, but implement it (design and build). Also, don't want to wait to finish the plan before we do something that is obviously a good idea.

Brandon - Was Cummins going to run a bus out there to West Hill?

Alicia - Not happy with Human Services moving out where people can't get to them via transit.

Brandon - Bartholomew is the only County in the state that does not provide rural transit. Cindy - The County Council turned down a \$60,000 request to get rural transit system. Substantial disappointment throughout the committee on this decision.

### Other:

Alicia - Suggested that we mark bus stops well; pavement markings was mentioned.

DBE - hearing necessary; what it is: % of our contracts that are to DBEs (Disadvantaged Business Enterprises).

Fares - Laurence wants to keep this on the agenda. Tom - is there a chance of farebox theft? Most agree that there's not much potential to take from the fare box.

Bob Pitman - asked if increasing the farebox revenue does anything to fed funding. Laurence - Really, it reduces federal reimbursement by half of the new farebox funds. So, we only get half the farebox revenue.

# Adjourn

# Transit Advisory Committee Dec 14, 2012 Meeting Minutes Minutes written by: Laurence Brown

### Attendees:

Laurence Brown - MPO Director Cindy Setser - ColumBUS Transit Coordinator Jackie Combest - Call-a-Bus user Tom Heller - Citizen / transit advocate Trena Carter - ARA Bob Pitman - Mill-Race Center Director Alicia McCreary - 2-1-1 Director

### Minutes:

Bob P - asked us to correct a couple of things. 3 vans: 1 - 20 passenger, 2 - smaller.

### Call-a-Bus Software

Laurence - purchasing Call-a-Bus software. Will do a Request for Proposals. Trena mentions that we need to include DBE firms. Laurence said we need to get this going soon. Cindy spoke about the details we will want to describe about our system, and Trena mentioned that the original application for the grant might have a description in it.

Laurence - Call-a-Bus paratransit plan includes 3 documents, the Paratransit Plan, the application(s), and the Handbook. Asked Jackie if we needed to do any special format so that he can read it. Jackie said there is a machine that can read documents and speak the words. Laurence thought we would want to make it with text and not photos so the machine reads it easily. Trena suggested we create an mp3 of these and put them on a link on the website.

Laurence - Meeting with an attorney, Greg Fehribach in early January. Big question is -- are we going to ask people to reapply for eligibility or just have the new policies apply to new applicants. It is suggested that we might want to do it in the summer if we do it at all. Jackie thinks it's legitimate to have people reapply. Trena indicated that we do need to make sure that the people that might be affected by this are notified of the public hearing and the what the policy will be.

### Application

Bob P asked about the current application. Cindy said that it is really self-certification, a very simple, one-page application asking for name and address and self-certifying that you're eligible. She gave an example of people that take Call-a-Bus now but are able to ride the fixed route. Bob says that people could really have a hard time filling out this application. It might need to be a caregiver that fills it out. Tom H thought the form could be more user-friendly. He thought it could be compressed and ordered better. A discussion of how the software is going to work with regard to keeping information about the passengers, their disabilities.

Trena thought we might want to make the full re-applying date later because of the need for each application to have a professional fill it out. Laurence talked about the order of events and that we're going to finish the fixed route study in the summer and change the routes by the end of the year. Trena mentioned that if the routes change, this may change the conditional eligibility. Cindy thought we would be able to deal with this. Laurence thought this does suggest that we might want to wait till after the changing of the routes.

Bob P thought that a housing manager might know more than a doctor about a person's ability to get around. He was also worried about people with mental disabilities that are masked. Cindy indicated that a medical professional is her preference.

### Route study

Laurence discussed the companies that responded to the RFP and why PB was chosen. Trena asked if we sent it to DBE. Laurence said one was, but this is MPO funded, so the DBE requirement is not required, although we still should. Laurence talked a little about Tim Reynolds, the project lead for the route study. He listed the things that they are supposed to look at. Tom H was concerned about their limit of three scenarios. Laurence is hoping they will have many more on the table, and then it will be reduced to three, but we could change it when the contract is written. Tom H asked about the Philadelphia company, and Laurence indicated they had a nice set of deliverables, and their pay rate was low, so there were lots of hours in the effort.

### Triennial Review Responses

Laurence discussed the issue of being late to FTA on responses and the DBE requirement they had. Cindy said we're still not completely done with that; things like the public participation plan for fare changes. The FTA regulator was impressed with the submission, otherwise. So there are things still to be submitted to complete the Triennial Review response.

The DBE policy was signed by the mayor and does not need to get formally approved by the Board of Works, although it went on their agenda somewhat by accident. They tabled it but didn't need to approve it anyway. We haven't heard back from FTA after submitting it.

### Transit Advisory Committee

Laurence read the ordinance out loud describing the Transit Advisory Committee. It has a typo in the code; it says "board", but should say "broad". We need to find the people that want to be on this committee and submit it to the mayor for formal appointment. Jackie suggested Bob Easterly. Bob P pointed out that this group was to meet quarterly, but it was almost always used for 5310 funds, and getting buses, and a formal process existed and this committee was part of that.

Laurence talked about the Transportation Safety Committee. He said it is to make all modes safer, but if it focuses on bike/ped/transit safety, the car safety tends to improve substantially too. He also mentioned that TAC is a subcommittee of this new committee, and it is going to substantially be the Steering Committee for the routes study. So, it's raising its clout. Cindy wasn't aware of the SRTS committee, and Trena asked how that worked with the MPO. Bob P suggested that both the Hospital and the business community need to get involved.

### Adjourn

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**APPENDIX D - Public Hearing Notice, Comments, Responses** 

THE REPUBLIC

# LEGAL **ADVERTISEMENT**

BILL TO: Client: Columbus Area Metropolitan Columbus Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Planning Organization Address: 123 Washington Street 123 Washington St Columbus, In 47201 Columbus, In 47201 TEARSHEETS WILL BE SENT TO BILLING ADDRESS Date: March 21, 2013 Contact Name: Laurence Brown Phone: 376-2502 Department: MPO

THE REPUBLIC Date(s): Please run on: Mar 22, 23, 2013

# PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the ColumBUS Transit System will conduct a public hearing for the purpose of soliciting input on proposed changes to ColumBUS Call-a-Bus services at the following time and location:

> April 1, 2013 2:00 PM until 6:00 PM Columbus City Hall, Meeting Hall 123 Washington St. Columbus, IN

At this hearing ColumBUS Transit will present information regarding its proposed update to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit Plan for the City of Columbus. The original Paratransit Plan was submitted in 1992.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires public entities providing fixed route service to the general public to also provide complementary paratransit service to those persons unable to use the fixed route system. Paratransit Plans must contain the following: when the service is required, eligibility criteria, level of service to be provided, and standards of operation as described in the federal code 49 CFR 37.121 through 49 CFR 37.155.

Interested persons will be given an opportunity to make comments on the proposed plan at this hearing. An interpreter will be provided upon request for those individuals requiring this service.

ColumBUS Transit's proposed updated ADA Paratransit Plan will be available for review beginning March 22, 2013. Copies may be obtained in person, at City Hall, Clerk Treasurer's Office, 123 Washington St., Columbus, IN, or ColumBUS Transit Mill Race Station, 850 Lindsey St., Columbus, IN 47201, or found online at www.CAMPO.IN.gov, or can be mailed or provided in alternative formats by contacting the ColumBUS Transit Mill Race Station in person or by calling (812)376-2506.

Written comments will be accepted by ColumBUS Transit Mill Race Station 7:00AM to 6:00PM Monday-Saturday from March 22 through April 5, 2013.

> Cindy Setser Transit Coordinator ColumBUS Transit

### Notice Placed in Buses



ColumBUS Transit invites you to participate in a Public Hearing regarding changes to Call-a-Bus Policies.

The changes are focused on compliance with American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulation for paratransit services. Transit and MPO staff will be available to answer questions and receive comments.

The policy document being changed is the AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT PARATRANSIT PLAN FOR CITY OF COLUMBUS. INDIANA available at City Hall, Clerk/Treasurer Office, at the ColumBUS Transit Mill Race Station, or online at www.CAMPO.in.gov

> ColumBUS Transit Public Hearing Monday, April 1, 2013 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM Columbus City Hall, Meeting Hall 123 Washington St, Columbus

If you require additional information please call ColumBUS Transit at (812) 376-2506

[to be completed after the Public Hearing]